



Five Star Restoration Partnership

National Association of Counties
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Wildlife Habitat Council

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NATION'S STREAMS AND WETLANDS TO BE RESTORED THROUGH COMMUNITY-LED EFFORTS

Washington D.C. -- The National Association of Counties, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Wildlife Habitat Council today have awarded over \$550,000 to 52 community-led conservation projects throughout the country. The Five Star Restoration Grant Program will provide \$5,400 - \$20,000 grants to community-based partnerships for support of wetland and streamside restoration projects. Major funding for these grants is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds of the Office of Water, and the NOAA Fisheries' Community-based Restoration Program for select grants in coastal areas. Participating communities have committed nearly \$3.8 million in additional funding and resources to these programs.

Five Star Restoration projects involve a high degree of cooperation, with local government agencies, elected officials, community groups, businesses, schools, and environmental organizations all working together to improve local water quality and restore important fish and wildlife habitats. The winning projects were selected from a competitive pool of nearly 200 applications. Consideration for funding is based upon the program's educational and training opportunities for students and at-risk youth, the ecological benefits to be derived, and the project's other cultural and economic benefits to the community.

"These partnerships are a perfect example of the benefits of community involvement in protecting our environment," said EPA Administrator Christie Whitman. "As we celebrate the Year of Clean Water, we must continue to find new ways to meet clean water goals. Educating our youth, as these projects do, ensures that we are preparing them to address the next generation of clean water challenges."

"NOAA Fisheries is proud to be a Five Star partner through our Community-Based Restoration Program," said National Marine Fisheries Service Assistant Administrator, Bill Hogarth. "The projects that will be accomplished through this partnership will produce on-the-ground results, and help foster an appreciation for the environment in communities across the nation."

Additional funding is provided by EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program, EPA Region III and Lockheed Martin Corporation. This is the fourth year that grants have been awarded under this innovative program. A list of projects receiving grants is attached.

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